SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH: Sir, it is only because of this reason in fact, it is one of the reasons why we had increased the mark-up at present. We have three categories of drugs—category 1, category 2 and category 3. It is mostly in the present categories I and 2 that these essential drugs belong. And because we wanted the manufacturers to increase their production of these drugs, we have increased the mark-up from 40, 55 to 75 per cent and 100 per cent and we expect that more production and more investment would come.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the thrust is to develop the drug industry. I would like to ask the Minister whether they consulted the public sector projects, namely, the HAL and the IDPL in formulating the policy with regard to development of the drug industry.

SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH: It is a very difficult question to answer. The hon. Member has asked me on what aspect I consulted. It is too general. I will not be able to react to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is too general. You can put a separate question. Now, we go to next Question.

Illegal mining in collieries

*250 SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:†

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whethtr it is a fact that illegal mining of coal in various collieries is rampant;

(b) if so, what are the details in regard thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a large number of persons have been killed in the course of illegal mining;

(d) if so, what is the total number of deaths which occurred on this account during the last two years; and

(e) whether any enquiry has been ordered to probe into the illegal mining, and if so, what are the findings of the enquiry and the action taken against illegal mining operators?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (e) There is no organised illegal coal mining in the lease-hold areas of the coal companies. However, as the coal belt in the country is vast, certain persons at times violate the provisions of law and indulge in illegal extraction of coal, sporadically and stealthily and the nature of the activities is such that no authentic reports about accidents, if any, in such operations will be forthcoming.

The Coal Mines Nationalisation Acts were amended in 1976 making illegal coal mining a cognizable offence, punishable with imprisonment extending upto 3 years and fine extending upto Rs. 20,000/-. The vires of these amendments have already been upheld by the Supreme Court in 1980.

The State Governments have been asked to take both punitive and preventive action against the offenders in terms of the Nationalisation Acts read with provisions of the Indian Penal Code. The State Governments in turn had already issued instructions to the District Authorities The Coal Companies have been directed to report the cases of illegal extraction of coal as and when detected by them to the law enforcing authorities in the States. Besides, the coal companies in conjunction with the State Governments' law enforcing authorities in the States conduct regular raids to apprehend offenders. Regular and surprise checks are also conducted by the coal companies.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: This statement has oversimplified a very

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bir Bhadra Pratap Singh.

complex problem and the solutions suggested in the answer are also very very simple. They cannot deal with the question. We know we are not only importing criminals from Eastern Uttar Pradesh to that area in Bihar but even mafia kings also we have imported from all these places to the area. We know the meagre laws and steps that you have suggested in your answer cannot tackle the problem. Therefore, may I know from the hon. Minister whether there is any collusion between the officials and the criminals? That is why this trade is flourishing so much and the magazines and papers have highlighted this problem. If you do not look closely to the problem from the point of view of official collaboration with these criminals, I think you cannot solve the menace.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: To our best knowledge no illegal mining taking place on a substantial scale has come to our notice. But whenever in some remote areas and in isolated patches such mining is done, or sometimes even as mining is closed, some people living nearby operate on that surface and take away some coal for themselves. Such things are being done. But even then we bring it to the notice of the State Government that it is for the State Government authorities to ensure against such operations. If there is any such illegal operation, they must take action against them.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: It has been suggested that under the legal provision the Nationalisation Act made a penal provision with three years' imprisonment and Rs. 20,000 as fine. The second measure that has been suggesteris that the State Government machinery and officials check and try to entrap these criminals to punish them. The factual position you have realised in your reply, but you are concealing the main part of it. May I point out that unless and until you take a serious legislative measure, merely making a provision for three years' imprisonment and Rs. 20,000 fine is not going to have any effect? Therefore, these provisions have not yet yielded any effect. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he is sincerely thinking of legislating on this part of the question which is creating a very serious problem in these two States, particularly and also in other States?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: The law is already there. It has to be implemented. If there is any lacuna in its implementation, we will try to persuade the State Governments to be more strict and to implement the law. There is no need for any additional legislation.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I am very sorry that the Minister does not take cognisance of the fact that illegal mining is on the rise. It is the complaint from all quarters. There are a number of reports on this also. Therefore, it is not true to say that it is only sporadic in nature.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I will repeat what the Minister has said. He has said no illegal large-scale mining has come to his knowledge.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: That is the point. I lay emphasis on the word 'large-scale'. It is not a law and order problem only. It is eating into the vitals of our national economy. It is very unfortunate that the situation has not drawn notice of the Government and the Minister in particular.

Anyway, I would like to know from the Minister, since there has been a total failure to check illegal mining, whether he will come up with a proposal to the West Bengal and the Bihar Governments to have a joint meeting along with the representatives of the Government of India and the CISF, because you have deployed the CISF in the coal-mining areas to beat down the trade unions, not to track-down the people who are holding the whole area to ransom. Therefore, it should be a joint effort of the Government of West Bengal, the Government of Bihar, the Government of India and the CISF. I would like to know whether you are going to consider this proposal seriously. Sir, part (b) May I know whether...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes are already over. Please sit down.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, we will consider suggestions of the hon. Member.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Sir, may I know from the Minister whether the Government have received any complaints with regard to illegal mining of coal? If this kind of activities are carried on we are all equally concerned. After receiving complaints by the Ministry of Energy, I would like to know whether these have been forwarded to the concerned State Governments. If so, what action they have taken on these complaints?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, some complaints were received and we have brought it to the notice of the concerned State Government and they are enquiring into those matters.

श्री राम चन्द्र विकल : सभापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि जो मौतें इन दो वर्षों के अंदर हुई है उसके बारे में वे क्या कोई जांच बिठायेंगे कि वे मौतें किस जगह पर हुई हैं, वैध जगह पर हुई हैं या अवैध जगह पर हुई हैं? क्या मंत्री जी इस प्रकार की कोई जांच बिठाने को तैयार हैं ताकि इस बारे में लोगों के मन में जो शंकाएं हैं वे दूर हो सकें?

श्री वसन्त साठे : इसकी जांच हो रही है। दो-तीन जगहों पर जो दो-तीन लोगों की मृत्यु हुई हैं इसकी जांच राज्य सरकार के मातहत है।

श्री रामचन्द्र विकल : वैध जगह पर हुई हैं या अवैध जगह पर?

श्री वसन्त साठे : कुछ अवैध जगह पर भी हुई हैं और उनकी जांच हो रही है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

*251. [*The questioner (Shri Parvathaneni Upendra) was absent. For answer* vide *cols.* 31—36 infra.]

*252. [*The questioner (Shri Sunil Kumar Pattnaik) was absent. For answer,* vide *cols.* infra.]

Loan assistance by West German financial institution

†*253. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received further loan assistance during the year for its various mining projects from the KFW—a Government of West Germany financial institution;

(b) if so, the total amount of increased loan to be received under the latest programme of loan assistance; and

(c) what steps are being taken to ensure that the foreign exchange under such schemes of loan assistance is not misused by any undertaking?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) During 1986-87 and this year, KFW assistance was received only for the projects of Neyveli Lignite Corporation. In January 1987, Government of India signed a loan agreement for DM 180 million with KFW for the NLC projects. This year (1987-88) KFW has agreed to reserve another DM 110 million for NLC's projects. Loan Agreement covering this amount of DM 110 million and an additional amount of DM 110 million committed in 1986-87 is expected to be concluded this year.

(c) The loan is utilised in accordance with the rules of the Government and the

†Previously Starred Question 233, transferred from the 30th April, 1987.